



## **An Introduction to Business Studies Stage 6 in the New HSC**

The new *Business Studies Stage 6 Syllabus* replaces the current 2 unit and 3 unit syllabuses in Business Studies (1994). The new syllabus is for implementation with Year 11 in 2000 and will be first examined in 2001.

The syllabus provides information that was formerly available in the KLA handbook. This includes descriptions of course requirements, assessment weightings for internal and external examination and examination specifications.

### ***What is similar?***

The *Business Studies Stage 6 Syllabus* has been subject to moderate change. Elements of the previous 2 unit and 3 unit courses are incorporated into the new syllabus. Changes have taken into account developments in the subject matter and in the business world. Considerable content in the previous syllabus is included in the new syllabus, although it has been reorganised in different topics and with a changed emphasis. The new Preliminary course includes a student Business Research Task (previously called the Business Assignment).

### ***What are the overall improvements?***

- Small business is a key theme of the syllabus, particularly the Preliminary course. It focuses on the role of small–medium business enterprises (SME's) and is integrated across the syllabus. The focus on small business will provide all students with a better understanding of the role and importance of small-medium enterprises and how they are a 'driving force' behind economic growth and employment opportunities in the community.
- Each topic has a focus statement that explains the topic and that guides teaching and learning in the topic area.
- The format of the syllabus places outcomes as the central feature and focus for teaching and learning.
- Outcomes are course outcomes — there are no topic specific outcomes — and appear with each topic. Most outcomes are addressed across a number of topics.
- There are no optional or elective topics in the syllabus, all students will cover the same content in the Preliminary and HSC courses, based on the course outcomes. The order of topics is not prescriptive and in practice may be influenced by students' needs, interests and access to case study and other resources.

- Each topic utilises business case studies to investigate and communicate ideas and issues related to the topic.
- Ethical and legal responsibilities of business and management are a feature of the new syllabus, especially in the HSC course.

***The following changes have been made to particular sections of the syllabus***

**Rationale, Aim and Objectives (pp 6, 8)**

- The Rationale emphasises that business is a feature of everyone's life and that we are all linked by business transactions.
- The syllabus emphasises the theoretical and practical aspects of business and management in contexts that students can relate to and encounter in their lives.
- The Aim emphasises that students will be empowered through their learning to become informed and responsible citizens and in their interactions with and participation in the business world.
- The Objectives of the syllabus flow from the Rationale and Aim and develop knowledge and understanding, skills and values and attitudes in relation to learning in Business Studies Stage 6.

**Course structure (p 9)**

- There are 4 topics in the Preliminary course that introduce students to the nature of business, establishing a business, the key functions of business, and planning in business. Students are required to complete a Business Research Task that investigates an established small business or develops a plan for a hypothetical small business.
- The HSC course comprises 5 topics, all of which are compulsory.

**Outcomes (pp 10–11)**

- All outcomes are explicitly linked to syllabus content and have been reduced in number from the current syllabus.
- The outcomes – which are course outcomes – link to the syllabus objectives, with the outcomes differentiated between the Preliminary and HSC courses.
- There are knowledge and understanding outcomes and skills outcomes that students work towards. Students will be expected to demonstrate achievement of outcomes in relation to what they know and can do.

**Content (pp 13–36)**

- The content in the Preliminary and HSC courses is more explicit and more defined, removing any uncertainty for teachers and students, for example the syllabus specifies the ratios required in financial analysis.
- The scope and depth of the syllabus is described in what students *learn about* and what students *learn to do* using a case study approach. Teachers will be able to combine the *learn about* and the *learn to* sections of the content to teach knowledge and understanding and the associated skills in each topic.

- Essential aspects of the content of the syllabus include:
  - the importance of small-medium enterprises (SME's)
  - entrepreneurship, establishing a business and the role of management
  - types of business structures and entities, including franchises
  - business goals
  - developing a business plan
  - the business environment
  - accounting and finance
  - marketing
  - employment relations
  - changing business and the influence of globalisation and global business, including opportunities for small business in the global business environment
  - ethical and social responsibilities of business
  - analysis of business annual reports and financial statements.
- The Preliminary course is an essential foundation for the HSC course. It develops core knowledge, understanding and skills concerning the nature of business and its operation in Australia. The focus on small-medium enterprises enables students to identify with business and promotes the essential role of SME's in the business community in Australia.
- The Business Research Task will enable students to research and communicate an aspect of small business that is relevant and interesting to them. The Business Research Task is an aspect of the Preliminary course that enables students to consolidate their learning in the course.
- The HSC course has 5 mandatory topics that focus on management, finance, marketing, employment relations and the globalisation of business and the opportunities for Australian business on the global scale.

### **Assessment (pp 39–46)**

- The Assessment and Reporting section of the syllabus covers all requirements for external and internal assessment of student performance and reporting against standards.
- A range of instruments in school based assessment is proposed (see pp 42, 43) to assess student performance in relation to the outcomes.
- The examination specifications (see p 44) include a range of assessment tasks to allow students to demonstrate what they know and can do in Business Studies.

### ***What will be needed to teach this subject?***

- *Business Studies Stage 6 Syllabus*
- The Higher School Certificate Business Studies Examination, Assessment and Reporting Supplement (the sample examination, marking guidelines and draft performance scale).

Current resources available in schools will continue to be useful, however some adjustment may need to occur in how they are used. As is currently the case, teachers will need to ensure that resources are contemporary and relevant and that case studies of businesses are applicable to the topic.

A further subject-specific document is being developed by the Board of Studies for distribution later in the year. This will assist teachers with the implementation of the revised syllabuses.

A list of a number of resources will be placed on the Board's website, <http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au>.

The Board of Studies will also provide assessment support materials, which will be generic across subjects.

Cross-sectoral professional development workshops (Department of Education and Training, Catholic Education Commission and members of the Association of Independent Schools) for Business Studies Stage 6 will be held. Venues and dates for these workshops have been published on the *New HSC* website — <http://www.newhsc.schools.nsw.edu.au> — and distributed to schools. The materials from the workshops will be available on this website.

*CURRICULUM SUPPORT for Teaching in Human Society and Its Environment 7–12* — a publication distributed each term by the Department of Education and Training — will carry an HSC supplement.

*Assessment and Reporting Bulletin* — published each term as a joint venture of the Department of Education and Training, the Catholic Education Commission and the Association of Independent Schools — will build on principles outlined in Board of Studies' newsletters and assessment support materials.

The professional teachers' association, Economics and Business Educators (EBE) offer the following professional development activity:

- Business Studies Preliminary course – 17 and 18 September 1999, at St Andrews Cathedral School. The program will provide an overview of the Preliminary course, programming workshops, information on assessment and performance scales, assessment workshops and a forum on teaching and learning ideas, strategies and resources.